

## **Eastern Sierra Citizen Watershed Assessments**

### **Summary**

The project proposed by Friends of the Inyo includes monitoring of riparian and adjacent upland wildlife habitat at six locations in Mono County and three locations in Inyo County. The selected sites include the following: Glass Creek (one site) and Deadman Creek (two sites) in the Upper Owens River Headwaters; Mill Creek (two sites) and Wilson Creek (one site) in the Mono Basin; and Lone Pine Creek (three sites) in the Owens Lake watershed.

The goals of monitoring are:

- design and execute scientifically credible studies that assess the condition of the aforementioned stream systems;
- screen for potential water quality problems and identify potential workable solutions, particularly as they apply to restoration activities; and
- measure the efficacy of place-based citizen stewardship and restoration projects as they relate to addressing water quality and habitat condition and sustainable recreational use.

This proposal builds upon current monitoring at the six Mono County sites and adds new monitoring locations at three more sites in Inyo County, expanding the monitoring and potential restoration to other drainages. Eastern Sierra Water Watchers, a citizen-based water quality monitoring group under Friends of the Inyo, will perform water quality monitoring to demonstrate the project's quantitative impacts and/or the need for restoration activities. Friends of the Inyo, after assessment of early results from the Mono County sites, has begun some restoration activities.

Monitoring sites were selected in partnership with the Inyo National Forest (Forest Service) and the Mono Lake Committee for their significant impacts to downstream water quality. Most sites are popular areas of high recreation use including off-road vehicle driving, camping, fishing and hiking, which contributes to the degradation of the riparian and upland habitat. The Mono Basin sites include historic mining use, a fish rearing operation, irrigated sheep pasture, Highway 395, and water used by a power plant.

Friends of the Inyo is respectfully requesting \$45,000 in a grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for Jan-Dec 08. Friends of the Inyo has secured matching funds of \$11,000. In-kind volunteer labor will provide \$26,160 value to the project.